SCHUMANN'S MASQUERADE.

THE STORY OF HIS PIANO WORK, THE "CARNIVAL."

A Composition Frequently Played by Pianists, but Seldom Comprehended by Hearers—Meaning of the Various Pieces—Ernestine von Fricken and the Little Bohemian Town of Asch.

When D'Albert played the "Carnival" the other day it suggested that in all probability too much is taken for granted by critics. Certainly men who have for many years practised this ungentle art fall into the error of supposing that every one else is as well acquainted with the facts about certain compositions as they are. It is naturally easy to dismiss a distinguished pianist's reading of an important work by saying that it was not discriminating or that it lacked understanding. This saves time and trouble. But a great many persons must wonder just what commentators mean in some instances, and there is no composition which more disturbs the hearer and subsequent reader in this manner than Schumann's "Carnival."

It is useless to play this composition for a miscellaneous audience and expect that there shall be a general appreciation of the performance. Even some of the pianists who play the work do not know what they are playing, because they do not know who the characters named in it are.

What, then, can the public be expected to know about Florestan, Eusebius, Estrella, Chiarina, or the significance of their intermingling with Chopin and Paganini? Who are Pierrot and Pantalon and Colombine? What mean those mysterious "Lettres Dansantes," A. S. C. H. and S. C. H. A., and what is the significance of "aveu," "reconnaisance" and "promenade?" Finally, why are all these grouped in a succession of little pieces under the comprehensive title, "Carnival"?

Men whose business it is to write about musical doings are supposed to know such things, and they fall into the error of supposing that every one else knows them, or at any rate will dig them up from the biographies of Schumann. The truth appears to be that most persons who listen to the "Carnival" have just a dim idea of its general design and no knowledge at all of its details, and that they never condemn themselves to the labor of reading the books in which the information may be found. Perhaps a newspaper clipping may serve a purpose, so here it is:

"The "Carnival" is Schumann's opus 9. It was begun in 1834, but was not completed till the following year. It bears the subtitle "Scenes Mignonnes sur Quatre Notes," of which the meaning will be explained in course. There are twenty-one pieces played in succession without any break. These are as follows: Preambule, A flat; Pierrot, E flat; Arlequin, B flat; Valse Noble, B flat; Eusebius, E flat; Florestan, G minor; Coquette, B flat; Réplique, B flat; Papillons, B flat; Lettres Dansantes, A. S. C. H., S. C. H. A., E flat; Chiarina, C minor; Chopin, A flat; Estrella, F minor; Reconnaisance, A flat; Pantalon et Colombine, F minor; Valse Allemande, A flat; Paganini, F minor; Aveu, A flat; Promenade, D flat; Pause, A flat; Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins, A flat.

These little pieces are crowded with all those eloquent devices of figure, rhythm, melodic form and harmonic sequence of which Schumann's piano music is so fruitful. They teem with details which suggest a definite and detailed purpose, and it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that there is an elaborate programme behind it all.

But we must bear in mind that Schumann was a writer of programme music more from fancy and sentimental inclination than from intellectual conviction. He had no profound theory of the philosophic nature of music to demonstrate in his works. He was simply a natural poet, with a free and somewhat capricious fancy, fed by a mind of intense activity and emotions of the most susceptible sort. He was fond of placing fanciful titles on his compositions, even when he had no detailed plan to work out. Sometimes the piece itself suggested the title; sometimes he wrote to voice a passing thought, and named the production simultaneously with its conception.

Now, let us see whence all these fanciful titles came. In the year 1833 a number of musicians, mostly young, met habitually in Leipsic and talked about their art. They bemoaned the state of music in Germany. Opera meant Rossini. Piano meant Henri Hertz and his kind. Mendelssohn alone was doing lofty work, and there were rumors of a Pole named Chopin. But these had no influence. What was to be done?

Out of the discussions of this little coterie of artists arose a new musical journal, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Its aim was to battle against the worthless productions of the music shops of the time and the equally worthless supine criticism which disgraced the German press. Schumann, Ludwig Schunke and Julius Knorr were the originators of this paper, and they were soon joined by Carl Banck. The paper still exists, but it is not such a power as it was in Schumann's day, for the composer proved to be one of the wisest, keenest, bravest musical critics that ever lived.

Schumann and his friends drew others to their side. The *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* battled for recognition for such men as Mendelssohn, Schubert, Ferdinand Hiller and Wilhelm Taubert. It laid the foundations of the fame of Chopin, Franz, Gade and Henselt. It made Sterndale Bennet and Berlioz known to Germany. No other musical journal has done such a work as this. As such papers are at present conducted no other ever will or can.

Battling for originality against contented mediocrity, known as Philistinism, these laborers became known to one another as a society called the Davidsbündler. This society existed principally and perhaps only in the brain of Schumann, who certainly was its creator. "It seemed suited to bring out different opinions relative to art, and to invent opposing artistic characters, chief among them Florestan and Eusebius, between whom stood the mediating master Raro."

Schumann, of course, got this notion from the war of the Philistines against David. It was a most characteristic fruit of Schumann's fancy. As Wasielewski says: "It afforded its creator the possibility of a suitable means of expression for those contrasting, romantic, humorous ideas, shifting from their very abundance, which floated confusedly through his mind."

In Florestan he embodied the passionate, aggressive side of his nature; in Eusebius the gentle, visionary contemplation of the abstract poetic mind. Together with these he indicated his associates. Raro was Frederick Wieck. Serpentinus was Carl Banck, who sometimes used that pseudonym. Thus for a time Schumann lived in a fanciful world, peopled with imaginary beings, all engaged in a struggle for the recognition of beautiful ideals in art and battling with all their strength against complacent mediocrity.

In 1834 also began Schumann's intimate acquaintance with a pretty but shallow young woman, Ernestine von Fricken, who came from Asch a little town on the borders of Bohemia and Saxony. In April she arrived in Leipsic and took up her abode in Frederick Wieck's house, and the susceptible Schumann, not perceiving the flimsiness of her nature, fell in love with her and desired to marry her. Fortunately, this flame burned itself out, but it also burned a page on Schumann's works.

We may now understand the "Carnival." Schumann himself said: "It originated in an earnest frame of mind and under peculiar circumstances." Certainly no other composition of his is so closely related to actualities as is this one.

It is an attempt to express in absolute music the impulses, aspirations and fancies influencing him at the period in which he entered the battle for the new ideas and was aflame with emotions warmed by the seductive Ernestine. Dancing through his brain in a series of fantastic pictures the portraits of his associates and his own duality came to him as guests at a masquerade.

He interwove the musical delineation of them with pictures of the typical characters of a carnival, the Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot, Pantalon. Among these glide the figures of Florestan, Eusebius, Chopin, Chiarina, Estrella and Paganini. We already know who four of these are. Chiara was a pet name for Clara Wieck, the daughter of Frederick Wieck, and eventually Schumann's wife. Chiarina is a diminutive.

Estrella was no other than the blooming Ernestine. In the "Papillons" we have a reference to an earlier composition, of which the first theme is quoted directly in the Florestan number. The march of the Davidsbündler against the Philistines, with which the composition ends, is now self-explanatory. What of the other titles, including the mysterious "Lettres Dansantes?"

For the explanation of these we look first to a letter written by Schumann to his friend, Henrietta Voigt, the cultivated wife of Carl Voigt, a merchant of Leipsic. Here it is:

My dear, ever watchful Henrietta: Herewith an enclosure. It vexed me to have to carry on the fond fraud against the father, under the mother's eyes. Yet I would like to have spoken to Ernestine herself. What do you think of my nice postscript? Rather "pleasant that I'm coming at once before the letter goes," to which I add the wish that she [Ernestine] as well as others may sometimes like to play the scale in E flat, C. H. and perhaps A. for I have just found out that Asch is a very musical name for a city, and that the same letters lie in my name and are the only musical ones in it, as the following figure shows, and which moreover greets you kindly. ROBERT SCHUMANN.

Then follows the postscript mentioned in the letter and containing the dancing musical letters A. S. C. H.—which spell the name of the town of Asch, where the delightful Ernestine dwelt. These letters must be read in the German manner. Es is E flat in German and H is B natural. B flat is called B.

The notes as set down in this postscript by Schumann are written on a treble clef with the signature of two flats and read A in the second space, E flat above the A, C and B natural descending—four eighth notes. Under these in the bass is a chord composed of the low F, the E flat in the third space and the G flat and C above it.

Schumann wrote over it in the letter, "My postscript doesn't please me, for it is tasteless, but the chance ideas are peculiar and pleasant." Under the theme he wrote, "That sounds very melancholy." Yet it was out of those four notes that he developed the "Carnival." In a letter to Ignatz Moscheles, written Sept. 22, 1837, he said:

"This is almost written for a special purpose; and all but three or four movements are built upon the notes A. S. C. H., which form the name of a little Bohemian town, where I have a musical friend and which, curiously enough, happen to be the only musical letters in my name. I composed the titles afterward. Is not music self-sufficient? Does it not speak for itself? Estrella is a name such as is put under portraits to hold the picture fast. Reconnaissance (recognition); aveu (avowal of love); promenade (the walk, such as is taken at German balls arm in arm with your partner). The whole has no artistic value; the different soul states only are interesting to me."

In regard to Estrella, Wasielewski says: "Schumann, when I asked him at Bonn, in 1853, told me that he meant by this name Ernestine, of whom he spoke at some length." And so there we have the entire exposition of the plan of this captivating composition.

Two things are peculiarly interesting, namely, Schumann's statement that he composed the titles afterward and his assertion that the whole has no artistic value. His queries—"Is not music self-sufficient? Does it not speak for itself?"—may be set aside for the present. All makers of programme music have from time to time disclaimed their craft. The music of this "Carnival" might have been self-sufficient had not the composer placed over the little pieces the titles either before or afterward.

The titles demanded explanation, and if Schumann composed the music without any definite purpose he must have composed it in a remarkable state of abstraction. The sketch of the genesis of the composition, the review of the personal elements operating in its creation, show that the work was intimately bound up with Schumann's life and that it must have been an expression of fancies born of his daily experiences.

He could hardly have expected any one to believe that the extraordinary reproduction of the style of Chopin contained in the number headed with that master's name was accidental and that the name was given after he himself had become conscious of the resemblance. If anything in the work is intentional, certainly that was. Paganini, too, had a place in Schumann's experience and he wrote *études* on melodies by that weird genius of the violin.

The musical references to Clara and Ernestine are of the most intimate personal sort, and the building up of the whole work on the name of the Bohemian town in which the luscious Estrella dwelt was no mere freak. It was the working out of an artistic purpose. Twice in this composition Schumann refers to an earlier work of a similar character, "Papillons," which also paints the flutterers of a ballroom. At the conclusion of that composition he introduced the old German melody known as the "Grandfather Dance," and this he uses again near the finish of the "Carnival."

The other reference to "Papillons" has already been noted. It was a quotation of the first theme in the Florestan of this *opus*. What shall we say of Schumann's own estimate of the artistic worth of the composition? Even Wasielewski, his biographer, writing in 1857, was unable quite to throw off the burden of the master's dictum. He said:

"The 'Carnival' is by no means destitute of artistic merit, especially when compared with his earlier productions. Even if the forms of the separate pieces are insignificant, but few numbers ever being played, they bear the marks of concise and organic culture. The musical construction of the separate parts is, for the most part, perfectly clear and transparent. To this is added an ingenious and characteristic expression and style, shown in the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic figures, whose variety, in comparison with the insignificant motif at the beginning, proves a rich, elastic and inventive faculty.

"In short, it is a true Schumann composition, full of his traits. Much of it is perfectly charming, sweet, graceful, elegant, but the development of the finale is thoroughly humorous and comic to the last degree. The composer attained this effect by a skilful combination of the *Grossvatertanz* with the steady marked rhythm of the Davidsbündler march, which strides along solemnly, as if conscious of victory, in three-fourths tempo. The two motifs, when compared, afford a most delightful contrast. Their opposing direction is evidently meant to illustrate the spiritual contest between youthful aims and the Philistines of art; but we can easily guess which is victor."

This contains much that is clearly descriptive of the merits and nature of this charming work, but it is written in a condescending tone. That can hardly be wondered at, since the author intimates that in his time it was customary to play the numbers of the work separately. No impression of their value could possibly be gained in this way. As well stand a masker in the middle of Broadway and from him try to picture the ball. No, we must hear the whole thing through to conceive it as it was, a bright, fanciful, whimsical, yet not unfeeling picture of a carnival of cherished images that whirled through the composer's mind.

Behold in the first bold chords of the preambule the invitation to the brilliant ballroom, the flinging wide of the portals of a splendid chamber, followed immediately by a gay roulade of gallantry and merriment, a perfect piano picture of the movement, glitter and sparkle of a masquerade. That concluded, we are introduced at once to the elementary typical figure of all masks—Pierrot, with A. S. C. in the very outset of his harmonic foundation.

Then flits in the gay and lilting Harlequin, with the first bar of his theme made out of A. S. C. H. Now a dance, the Valse Noble, and the character of the ball is established. But what strange figure is this that comes gliding upon the scene?

Listen to the gentle, meditative strains. Eusebius, the dreamer; Schumann in his introspective mood! Treading eagerly upon his heels comes the passionate Florestan, depicted in a rushing, storming little piece, whose mood is broken only by the remonstrance of the opposing nature of Eusebius voiced in that bewitching frament of the "Papillons." The first notes of this Florestan theme are again A. S. C. H.

Then comes the tripping, elusive Coquette, fit figure for a masquerade, and she too sings first the mystic letters. Next comes "Papillons," the butterflies of the social sunlight, with the same four letters in the same order at the beginning of the melody. The next number is clear enough, for it is called "Lettres Dansantes."

The splendid breadth of the melodic and rhythmic character of the next number, the "Chiarina," shows that Schumann had a profound belief in the nobility of Clara's character. The energy and sonority of this number prepare us excellently for the contrast of the ensuing number, "Chopin," the composer whom Schumann discovered and adored. Now Estrella glides into our line of sight, an Estrella of quaint rhythm, piquant melody and fleeting swiftness, an elusive and puzzling Estrella.

Next follows the Reconnaisance, with its refreshing modulation from A flat into B, hinting at new views. "Pantalon et Colombine" is a movement offering in its briskly contrary movement a pretty sketch of these perennial opponents of pantomime.

Another waltz—for we must not forget the dance—and then the eerie figure of Paganini floats through the ballroom. Now comes the declaration of love (aveu), the promenade, that brilliant piece of passage work called a "pause," and finally the crashing march of the artistic brethren of David against the smug Philistines. Always we find in some order the letters A. S. C. H. as food for thematic matter. Sometimes A. and S. are combined in AS, the German C flat.

The "Carnival" is a more enduring work than its creator believed it to be. It is to-day a living, breathing thing, not a majestic masterpiece, but the quintessence of mellow fancy, amiable vision, tender sentiment and airy humor. Its purely musical qualities are captivating to a pianist, and its great intimacy with the actualities of Schumann's life ought to make it most interesting to every admirer of a lovable character. W. J. HENDERSON.

NOTES OF MUSIC EVENTS.

The programme for the week at the opera is as follows: Monday night, "Les Huguenots," with the same cast as heretofore. Wednesday, "La Gioconda," with no change of cast. Wednesday afternoon, "Siegfried," with Mme. Ackté as *Brunnhilde* for the first time. Thursday evening, "Die Fledermaus." Friday, "Lohengrin," with Mr. Saléza for the first time as the knight, and Mme. Eames as *Elsa*. Saturday afternoon, "Les Huguenots," and Saturday evening, "Tristan und Isolde," with Mr. Dippel and Mme. Nordica in the leading parts.

Wagner's "Der Liebesmahl der Apostel" will be sung at the Liederkranz concert to-night.

Hoffman and Kreisler will play together at Carnegie Hall this afternoon.

Sam Franko's last concert of old music will take place at Mendelssohn Hall on Thursday evening, Feb. 23. José da Motta, pianist, will play Mozart's A major concerto and the chorus of the Society for Ethical Culture will sing. The pianist, chorus and orchestra will perform together Beethoven's choral fantasia, opus 80.

Programmes for the concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall: Thursday evening, Feb. 16, César Franck's symphony in D minor, Bruch's serenade for violin and orchestra, Strauss's "Don Juan," and Goldmark's overture "In Italy." Saturday afternoon, Feb. 18, Cornelius's "Barber of Bagdad" overture, D'Albert's concerto in E major for piano, Weber's "Invitation to the Dance," Berlioz version, and Rimsky-Korsakow's "Scheherazade" suite. The soloist on Thursday evening will be Marie Nichols, violinist, and on Saturday afternoon Eugen D'Albert.

At all of the recent People's Symphony Concerts every seat has been sold some time in advance and hundreds of persons have been turned away unable to find places. To remedy this condition to some extent, it is hoped to provide extra chairs on the platform of Carnegie Hall—as has been done at several recent numerously attended concerts by Mme. Sembrich and others—for the next People's Symphony Concert, which is to occur on Friday evening, Feb. 17. A specially attractive programme has been arranged for this event by F. X. Arens, the conductor, the principal orchestral numbers being the "Leonore" symphony by Raff, the symphonic poem, "Omphale's Spinning Wheel," by Saint-Säens, and the introduction to the third act of Wagner's "Lohengrin." The soloist will be Hjalmer von Dameck, who will play a new violin concerto by E. Herrmann, a local composer.

Mrs. Lillian Birmingham, a contralto who has sung in this country and in Europe, is to give a song recital in Mendelssohn Hall on Friday afternoon, Feb. 24. Mrs. Birmingham studied singing with Jacques Bouhy in Paris and Georg Henschel in London. She recently arrived in this city from San Francisco, where she was prominent in musical circles.

Albert von Doenhoff is to give a piano recital in Mendelssohn Hall on Saturday afternoon, March 8.

Adele Aus der Ohe sailed for Europe on Thursday last and will remain in Germany, where she is to make a tour, until the middle of April, when she will return to this country to make a spring tour with the Boston Festival Orchestra. Miss Aus der Ohe will open her German tour in Berlin, where she is to play with the Berlin Philharmonic Society, Arthur Nikisch, conductor.

THIS WEEK AT THE THEATRES.

NOT MANY NOVELTIES IN IT; THE OLD PLAYS ARE DOING WELL.

Mr. Aldora Shem, From the West, Is Going to Try His "Hamlet" on Us—Ada Rehan as Lady Teazle—Willard in "The Middleman"—Rural Drama in 14th St.

A new rural melodrama, the reappearance of Mr. Willard in "The Middleman," the production of a Maxim Gorki drama in German and the appearance of a gentleman from the West in "Hamlet" for one afternoon only are the sole theatrical changes this week. Miss Ada Rehan and her company are to play "The School for Scandal" at the Liberty to-morrow and for the rest of the week, but that is hardly a novelty. Her *Lady Teazle* has been seen in almost every city in the world in which the classic comedy has any admirers, and has everywhere received enthusiastic commendation. Mr. Charles Richman, who is known to be a fine and manly actor, will be seen as *Charles Surface* in this production. The rest of the cast is strong. Here, as in all the theatres, there will be a special matinée to-morrow.

E. S. Willard begins the final week of his engagement at the Knickerbocker Theatre to-morrow. "The Middleman," by Cyrus Blenkam, is perhaps his best known part. The play will be repeated on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings Mr. Willard will present J. M. Barrie's comedy "The Professor's Love Story," another of the popular plays in his repertory.

"The Confessions of a Wife," a new melodrama by Owen Davis, will have its first performance at the Fourteenth Street Theatre to-morrow afternoon. The production is under the direction of A. H. Woods. The play itself is described as a drama of unusual heart interest and action, possessing plenty of comedy as well as thrills. The cast will include Kate Dal-Glesh and Harry Glasier, both of whom have been stars on their own account.

Mr. Aldora Shem, an actor who has had nine years' experience in the West, is to play "Hamlet" at a special matinée at the New York Theatre next Tuesday. There will be only the one performance, but he has engaged a competent company for it. He says he comes to New York for a verdict on his acting of this classic rôle, for on it his future as an impersonator of legitimate rôles will depend. He does not expect to create a sensation, but he hopes for a favorable verdict on his work from the public and the critics.

At the Irving Place Theatre, on Wednesday, Maxim Gorki's powerful play "Nachtasyl" ("The Night Refuge") is to be produced for the first time in this country. The work is described as less of a drama in the conventional sense of the word than a study of Russian social conditions and Russian character. Like Hauptmann's "The Weavers," it is an analysis and reflection of appalling misery, showing the hopelessness of life among the lower classes in the great Russian cities. For the first two evenings this week and on Saturday "Die Luberschule" will be repeated.

Maude Adams's stay at the Empire Theatre will continue for only three weeks longer. Her engagement has already been twice extended. She will continue for the rest of her time to present "The Little Minister" and the new play "'Op O' Me Thumb," in which she has won new laurels.

At the Criterion Francis Wilson and his liver regulating play, "Cousin Billy," continue their successful careers. Mr. Wilson frisks and frolics through the amusing scenes in this comedy in the jolliest and liveliest way, providing more laughs than the audience can hold.

"Mrs. Leffingwell's Boots," the most successful of all of Augustus Thomas's plays, begins its second month at the Lyceum Theatre to-morrow. Full houses are enjoying the comedy, which gives them no respite from laughter. Wives with jealous husbands find amusement in this comedy, and also find in Mrs. Leffingwell's methods aids of immense value.

"Friquet" has come to its last week at the Savoy Theatre. The play presents one of the novelties of the season in Marie Doro's fistic battle with a man considerably her physical superior. It ends, of course, in a victory for the lady, who floors her antagonist with a left hook to the jaw.

Arnold Daly's production of "You Never Can Tell" has so impressed ex-Senator Reynolds, the new lessee of the Garrick Theatre, that the play is to remain there after he takes possession of the playhouse on April 1. George Bernard Shaw's comedy in the five weeks it has been playing seems to have lost none of its attractiveness.

The fine acting of Mrs. Fiske and the Manhattan Theatre Company in "Leah Kleschna" is one of the features of Broadway amusements and will continue to be so till late in the spring. Theatregoers who fail to see this play will miss one of the notable productions of the season.

Blanche Walsh is having great success with her new play "The Woman in the Case" at the Herald Square. The audiences are enthusiastic and she has to respond to many curtain calls each night.

One of the most popular stage heroes in town is Robert Edeson's *Strongheart* in the play of that name at the Hudson, and the De Mille play is just the sort to stir the right feeling audience.

At Wallack's Raymond Hitchcock has firmly reestablished the "Yankee Consul." Though it ran for five months in its last stay here, as many people as ever go to see it now.

"The College Widow" at the Garden is credited with being the strongest drawing card in the theatrical world just now. Everybody wants to see George Ade's comedy, and many persons want to see it more than once.

At the New Amsterdam the splendid "Humpty Dumpty" has reached the last three weeks of its stay. It is a tuneful as well as a gorgeous production, and lots of young folks will regret to see it go.

"The Duchess of Dantzic" is doing very well at Daly's, which is only what was expected from a George Edwardes production at such a playhouse.

Musical comedy of the liveliest sort is at the New York this week with Ward and Vokes in "A Pair of Pinks." The two comedians will be followed next week by Wright Lorimer in "The Shepherd King."

Mrs. Leslie Carter is going on triumphantly at the Belasco, where Tuesday night of this week will mark her fiftieth performance in "Adrea." Mrs. Carter's *Adrea* is the longest and most exacting part she has ever undertaken, and her physician advised her against playing more than one matinée a week, but she will appear both to-morrow afternoon and on Washington's Birthday afternoon.

David Warfield, as the old German music master, is still so much in favor that it is possible that Thursday matinées may be reestablished as a permanent feature of his season.

This is Edward Terry's last week at the Princess. He will repeat "The Passport" until Wednesday evening. Then "The House of Burnside" and "Bardell vs. Pickwick" will be revived for the rest of the week.

A special feature of "Fantana" at the Lyric are poster matinées on Wednesdays. On those days each woman in the audience receives an autographed picture in colors of Jefferson De Angelis, Katie Barry or some other popular member of the company.

"Fatinitza" will again be Fritzi Scheff's opera at the Broadway for the next two weeks. In this Miss Scheff has made her greatest success. Its score gives her plenty of musical opportunity, and the part of the dashing young soldier fits her admirably.

In its new dress the reopened Madison Square Theatre evidently appeals to the taste of theatregoers and has regained its old-time popularity. "Mrs. Temple's Telegram," with Frank Worthing, Grace Kimball, Thomas A. Wise and Margaret Drew in it, is a genuinely amusing farce.

"Buster Brown" is breaking records at the Majestic. Next season Master Gabriel, the diminutive comedian who is *Buster*, will be promoted to stellar rank in a new production designed especially to display his talents, musical and mimic. The new piece is entitled "Little Jack Horner." Contracts for the scenery have already been let, but "Buster Brown" is likely to finish out the season at the Majestic.

If a popular vote were taken for the most tuneful of the musical comedies now on the stage here, a very large number of votes would be cast for the Victor Herbert-Glen Macdonough piece, "It Happened in Nordland," at the Lew Fields Theatre. An Indian song is soon to be introduced into the production to follow the Indian dance, and this week Joseph Herbert and Harry Fisher will have new songs and Bessie Clayton and Harry Davenport a new dance.

Trixie Friganza will make her bow as one of the Weber all star stock company at the Weber Music Hall to-morrow. She takes the rôle of *Mimi de Chartreuse* in "Higgledy-Piggledy." Both this piece and "The College Widower" are doing well.

Henrietta Crosman in "Sweet Kitty Bellairs" has just closed a successful week at the Academy of Music. Her engagement there is limited to March 6, when she will be followed by Blanche Bates in "The Darling of the Gods."

A popular drama of East Side life comes to the American Theatre to-morrow in "Cohen's Luck," in which Joseph Welch has been starring successfully. The play is to have an elaborate production here and has a strong supporting cast.

Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's play "A Lady of Quality," in which Julia Arthur won a triumph several years ago, is to be lavishly revived this week by the stock company at the Yorkville. Annie Sutherland will play the part Miss Arthur formerly had.

Frank Daniels has brought "The Office Boy" to the Grand Opera House for the week. Clara Bell Jerome and Sallie Fisher take the parts originated by Eva Tanguay and Louise Gunning.

At the West End, "Siberia," as revived by William A. Brady at the Academy of Music recently, will be the attraction for the week. A reproduction of the Kishineff massacre and a ballet of Russian dancers are features of this production.

Nat Goodwin in "The Usurper" comes to the Harlem Opera House for the week. It is a play with all the favorite Goodwinesque characteristics and a series of situations novel in a Goodwin play as well.

The Murray Hill stock company is to play Jane Mauldin Feigl's "Texas," a wholesome, breezy play of the Lone Star State. Robert Conners plays the hero's part and Florence Lester is *Texas West*.

A melodrama abounding in thrills is "The White Tigress of Japan," which comes to the New Star this week. It deals with supposed incidents in the Russo-Japanese war, and its scenes are laid in Japan, China, Corea and Manchuria.

Lottie Blair Parker's picturesque comedy "Under Southern Skies" comes to the Metropolis Theatre for the week. It presents an attractive picture of old Southern life.

At the Third Avenue the week's play is "Two Little Waifs," a melodrama in which two very bright children play the principal parts.

Louise Beaton, in her comedy-drama "Rachel Goldstein," is at the Windsor.

Proctor's Twenty-third Street Theatre this week presents another spectacle on the lines of the "Woodland Nymphs," which was so successful there last week. The new act is called "Pretzels," and has been elaborately staged by H. T. MacConnell. Carlotta continues her daring feat of looping the loop on a bicycle from the top gallery, and there are new vaudeville entertainers, famous in their parts. "Blind" Tom, McCabe, Sabine and Vera, in the skit "The Arrival of Netty McCarthy"; the Empire Comedy Four and Wood and Berry are some of them.

The stock company at the Fifth Avenue is to play the successful farce comedy "The Money Makers" this week. This is the play in which Ida Conquest had one of her early triumphs. In the vaudeville part of the programme are the Wood Nymphs and several good singers and musicians.

At Proctor's Fifty-eighth Street Theatre the week's play is "The Only Way," adapted from Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities." The cast is headed by William Ingersoll and Edna Phillips. There is good vaudeville between the acts.

"The Greatest Thing in the World," originally produced at Wallack's Theatre by the gifted Mrs. Le Moyne, is to be played at the 125th Street Theatre this week. The vaudeville performers include Anges Mahr, the toe dancer, and the Ford Brothers.

Concerts to-night at all the Proctor theatres.

One of the most famous troupes of acrobats on the stage, that of Hassan Ben Ali, is the top feature of the programme at Keith's. These performers do a remarkable act in pyramid building. Rose Wentworth and her trained horses are another attraction on the programme. Comedy is supplied by O'Brien and Havel in their skit "Ticks and Clicks," and there are besides skilful musicians, really funny comedians and other entertainers.

Leading Tony Pastor's programme is the Liliput Trio in a clever acrobatic act on a double wire. Next to this comes a comedy new at Pastor's, called "Our Country Cousin." Matthews and Harris have a farcical novelty called "The Pirate King" as their part of the entertainment. These are only a few of Mr. Pastor's stars. There are also the Ford Brothers, dancers, from Lew Dockstader's company; Harry Thomson, Annetta B. Hart, Lavardo and Huard, Harry Wardell and many others.

The newest music hall, the Colonial, continues the attractive programme with which it opened last week. The scenic effects in the ballet "The Duel in the Snow" and the extravaganza "The Athletic Girl" have been warmly praised. The vaudeville specialties are slightly changed this week, and they are excellent of the kind.

Herbert Kelcey and Effie Shannon, in a little comedy called "Journeys End in Lovers Meeting," are at the Circle Theatre this week. Some of the other performers are Edith Helena, the high soprano; the Spook Minstrels, Archer's Five Filipino Girls, the Miquani Family and the Six Glinserettis.

The programme at Hammerstein's Victoria is opened by Dan McAvoy and his Fifth Avenue Girls. Some of the other features of it are the Magic Kettle, the Four Huntings, the Foley Boys, Mlle. Olive and Marguerite and Hanley.

Blanche Ring is singing at Hurtig & Seamon's this week, and she has a budget of new songs. Other entertainers there are Mr. and Mrs. Gardner Crane, Joe Flynn and La Belle Blanche.

Sam Devere's burlesquers are at the Gotham this week.

Concerts to-night at the American, Grand Opera House, Harlem Opera House, West End, Dewey, Gotham, Hurtig & Seamon's, Hammerstein's Victoria, New Star, Metropolis and the Eden Musée.

The two burlesques at the Dewey are given by Bob Manchester's company, the Cracker Jacks. A vaudeville bill is offered as well.

La Belle Rosa and her Oriental dancers are to be seen at Huber's Museum. Rosa is a famous whirling dancer. Besides the array of freaks there is also a vaudeville entertainment.

"Bluebeard" Hoch is to be seen in the World in Wax at the Eden Musée. The Karabanzo troupe of acrobats entertain and Prof. Krueger's orchestra plays daily.

The second annual Dress Rehearsal of the Green Room Club, a vaudeville entertainment by theatrical managers and actors who do not appear in vaudeville, is to be given at the New York Theatre to-night. The feature of it is to be the début of Raymond Hitchcock as a ventriloquist, with real managers as the dolls, but most of the well known actors in town will help in the entertainment.

The Treasurers' Club of America, an organization composed of the men in the box offices at the various theatres, will give its annual entertainment at Wallack's to-night. Emma Carus, May Robson, Estelle Wentworth and many more are to help, and the Police Department Band is to play.

THE BROOKLYN THEATRES.

"The County Chairman" at the Broadway—"Checkers"—Chevalier at the Orpheum.

One of Henry W. Savage's most popular productions, "The County Chairman," which ran for a year in Manhattan, and has had a correspondingly long stay in Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia, comes to the Broadway Theatre to-morrow, beginning with a special matinée. Its quaint characters have amused many thousands of theatregoers. There is the village Smart Aleck, the fellows who lounge about the post office and never get any mail, the village dressmaker, the station master, the storekeeper and many more such as only a man brought up in a Middle Western village as George Ade was could draw. The cast is the original one which elicited so much praise when the play came out.

There is a concert at the theatre to-night.

Most popular of all racing plays is "Checkers," which comes to the Majestic Theatre this week. It broke the record for attendance at the Broadway Theatre when it came to Brooklyn last November. The original cast will be seen, headed by Thomas W. Ross, and the scenic production includes the famous group of dancing pickaninnies.

Albert Chevalier, the famous English singer of coster songs and character entertainer, will be all this week at the Orpheum Theatre. He comes from the Circle, Manhattan, where last week hundreds who wanted to hear him were turned away. The songs he sings have pathos, humor and real music in them. Others of the Orpheum's entertainers this week are Henry Lee, the Three Foscarys, Howard and Worth, and T. W. Echert and Emma Bey, these last in a musical comedy.

At Hyde & Behman's this week a new feature in vaudeville will be seen in the production by Robert Hilliard and cast, including Lillian Thacher, June Pelton, Earl Ryder and Frederick Maxwell, of a one-act drama named "As a Man Sows," by Campbell McCulloch. The play is probably the most complete of its kind yet attempted outside of the legitimate theatres, and Mr. Hilliard's success in it has been great. In the programme are also Dolan and Lenharr, the Watsons, Hutchings and Edwards company, Lucy Clarke, Knox Wilson, Harry Brown, Sullivan and Pasqualina and Burrows and Sawyer.

There will be a concert to-night at the theatre, in which Peter F. Dailey and the others of last week's bill will take part.

At the Grand Opera House this week the musical comedy "Nancy Brown" will be presented by Wells, Dunne & Harlan, with Mary Marble as *Nancy*, a cast of able and well known principles and a large chorus. All of the songs sung by Marie Cahill have been retained and some new ones added, and the settings and costumes are those of the orginal production.

The Folly Theatre offers this week a diversion from the ordinary attractions in Kellar, the magician. His illusions and sleight of hand tricks have been amplified this season by the addition of many new tricks and he is accompanied by another celebrated magician in Paul Valadon, from Egyptian Hall, London. Valadon's specialty is causing the disappearance of persons from the centre of a brilliantly lighted and unobstructed stage. Kellar will show "The Magic Dial," the "Levitation of the Princess Karnac" and other large illusions.

Concert to-night with many vaudeville favorites.

At the Park Theatre this week another melodrama by Hal Reid will be seen in "A Working Girl's Wrongs," which has to do more or less with the labor problem. One of the principal scenes shows Sing Sing Prison and the electric chair, from which the hero narrowly escapes death. Another scene is a cigarette factory with the girls at work. The company is a strong one.

For the Amphion another good programme has been arranged. It includes Olive May, the original *Bonita* of "Arizona," and John W. Albaugh, Jr., in a comedy by Grant Stewart, given for the first time in Brooklyn; Riccobono's trained horses, Adele Archer and Orisco Worden in the operetta "The Queen's Fan," and Harrigan, "the tramp juggler." There are many more besides these.

At the concerts this afternoon and to-night the stars of last week will appear.

Miner's Bohemian Burlesquers are playing at the Star this week in a musical farce in three acts called "A Day at the Races." There is a programme with special features in addition.

At the Gayety this week the Thoroughbreds Burlesquers provide entertainment in two skits called "Looking for a Duke" and "The Thoroughbreds on a Lark." In the company are Washburn and Flynn, Mlle. La Tosca the Dancing Mitchells, and Kelly and Ashby in acrobatic nonsense.

Keeney's Theatre this week has its usual attractive vaudeville bill. Henry E. Dixey, one of the stars that the continuous performance houses have taken from the legitimate stage, provides the top line feature in a one-act play entitled "David Garrick on the Art of Acting," condensed from the well known comedy which Sir Charles Wyndham and his company have recently been playing in Manhattan. The other entertainers are numerous and capable.

John Drew is playing at the Montauk Theatre this week in his last and one of his most successful comedies, "The Duke of Killicrankie." Margaret Dale and Fanny Brough are the women in the cast.

At the Gotham, "The Child Wife."

Watson's Theatre, burlesque and vaudeville.

FELIX WEINGARTNER MAY STAY.

That Is, if the Philharmonic Makes a Practical Offer.

Felix Weingartner has returned to the United States for another hurried visit which gives him the chance to rehearse various orchestras, see the interior of various concert halls and then hurry back to Munich to resume there the concerts which he would have conducted if he had not been brought here by the Philharmonic Society.

This year Herr Weingartner is to have a few days preceding his departure to look around New York. He will not, as he did last year, go from Carnegie Hall to the steamer. Mme. Weingartner, who accompanies her husband on this visit, wanted to have a look at something else besides Carnegie Hall and the Hotel Netherland. She was a Baroness before her marriage to the conductor, and when he came here last winter the two had been married only a week.

Another acquisition of the conductor just before he left Munich was the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor which the French Government conferred on him.

"I don't wear it," he said with a smile, "although I saw a musical gentleman with one on the other night. When I go to Paris, where the ribbon has a significance to everybody who sees it, I shall put it on. I never wear decorations anywhere outside of the country in which I happened to get them. Sometimes when I am going to conduct a concert in a country in which I have been decorated I almost forget to take along the decoration. It would, of course, be impolite of me to play for a Prince who had decorated me and not to have on his order. But there are lots of Princes in Germany, and they nearly all have orders."

Just before he sailed for this country it was announced that Herr Weingartner had resigned the direction of the Royal Symphony concerts of Berlin. This was not altogether true.

"I did write to Berlin, resigning my post as conductor of the Royal concerts there," Herr Weingartner said, "but it was not accepted. I was asked to wait until I came back from the concerts here before I made my final decision. The Royal concerts are given at the opera house in Berlin, and the orchestra is the orchestra of the opera. After I decided to give up operatic conducting, I retained those concerts. But the journey from Munich to Berlin and back again has proved too much, as I had twelve concerts in Munich and ten in Berlin. I must work at composition and I must have time to read."

The real question that interests all who talk now to Herr Weingartner is his intentions for the future. He has been discussed as a possible conductor of the Philharmonic, and his name has unofficially been mentioned as a conductor of the Boston Symphony at some future date. Herr Weingartner expresses himself with the greatest frankness on this subject.

"What my feelings toward accepting the conductorship of the Philharmonic are," he said, "is not important now, as the society has made me no offer of a kind that is practical. I might be able to accept one if it were. The number of concerts suits me very well and I should enjoy living in New York. At least, I think I should. Of course when one comes for a short visit everybody is so charming. But I believe I should like it always.

"Such a post as the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra I should never accept under any circumstances. Think of it; to conduct a hundred concerts in a season and to have to travel about as that orchestra does! A man would have time for nothing else and would never get out of a concert hall."

Whether Herr Weingartner will be accepted by the society or not has not been decided, although none of the foreign conductors has made the same success he did last year. Probably it would be difficult for the society to pay the large salary necessary for any conductor who intends to devote himself to the Philharmonic. All the previous conductors have been at the Metropolitan or have had their own orchestras and brought up their incomes to the desired figure in that way. But Herr Weingartner will not be able to do any of those things.

"I don't say that I shall never conduct opera again," Herr Weingartner told THE SUN reporter, "for I did conduct 'Tristan und Isolde' twice last summer in Munich and enjoyed it very much. I should never again take any permanent employment as an operatic conductor, however. What I desire is a limited number of concerts and the time to make them as nearly perfect as possible."

After the close of his season in Munich, Herr Weingartner will go to Paris to conduct with the Colonne orchestra a Beethoven festival, in which he is to give nine symphonies and two of the concertos.

"Only one other contemporaneous German musician has the Legion of Honor," Herr Weingartner said, "and, curiously enough, he got it for the same reason that I did. Felix Mottl, while he was intendant at Carlsruhe, revived several of the Berlioz operas, among them 'La Prise de